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News Release

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Edmonton night clubs fined for fire code violations

Edmonton, January 9, 2008 – Three Edmonton night clubs have been fined in Provincial court for not complying with Alberta Fire Code requirements. Two night clubs pleaded guilty to exceeding the posted maximum occupant load. The third establishment pleaded guilty to obstructing an exit.

The Thirsty Turtle was fined $7,000 for their second overcrowding offence, which occurred on April 15, 2007. On that date, the Edmonton Police Service found the establishment to have approximately 219 people in the club, almost double the permitted occupant load of 149 people. The first overcrowding offence occurred on October 24, 2004.

During an operational night patrol by Edmonton Fire Rescue Services fire prevention officers on May 12, 2007, Halo night club was found to have approximately 184 people in the club. The permitted occupant load for Halo is 149 people. This was Halo's first offence and they were ordered to pay a fine of $3,500.

On May 20, 2007, during another operational night patrol, fire prevention officers found Hudson's on Whyte had obstructed the rear exit of the building. They were fined $4,000.

In 2007, Fire Prevention Officers visited 975 bars/night clubs on scheduled and unscheduled operational night patrols. During these inspections, only four charges were laid for non-compliance of the Alberta Fire Code requirements. Four additional charges were laid from information obtained from the Edmonton Police Service.

"The City of Edmonton is committed to public safety. In order to ensure that citizens are safe, Edmonton Fire Rescue Services inspects establishments like bars and night clubs on a regular basis, said Edmonton's Fire Chief Randy Wolsey. "Situations of overcrowding are rare because many of these establishments make a concerted effort to comply with the fire codes."

Businesses can be fined upwards of $15,000 for the first overcrowding offence and up to $30,000 for the second and subsequent offence. The convictions and fine amounts are decided by the presiding Judge in Provincial Court.

About Edmonton:

This is a city alive with energy and boundless opportunity - a growing economic powerhouse where business thrives and more than a million lives enjoy the freedom to explore, experiment, experience, excel and expect the most out of every day. A place like no other, Edmonton is filled with surprises great and small and a calendar packed with artistic, sporting, theatrical and cultural celebration.

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